

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

EA Title: *“Purchase, Transfer and Management of Conservation Easements in the Southern Upper San Pedro River Basin of Cochise County, Arizona”*

Lease/Serial/Case File No. Various

BLM Office: Tucson Field Office, San Pedro Project Office

Finding of No Significant Impact:

I have reviewed the Programmatic Environmental Assessment, *“Purchase, Transfer and Management of Conservation Easements in the Southern Upper San Pedro River Basin of Cochise County, Arizona”* (June 2001), including the explanation and resolution of any potentially significant environmental impacts. This EA was written by the U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and adopted by the BLM by this FONSI/Decision Record. I have determined that the proposed action will not have any significant impacts on the human environment and that an EIS is not required. I have determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the Safford District Resource Management Plan approved in Record of Decision dated September 1992, as amended by Land Tenure Amendment to the Plan dated September 1994.

Below are the substantive reasons for finding no significant impact:

- **The proposed action will not result in any impact of any Threatened and Endangered species.**
- **The proposed action will not impact any critical elements of the Human Environment.**
- **There will be no adverse energy impact.**
- **All Federal authorizations to carry out land use activities on Federal lands or tribal lands, including all leases and permits, must include a requirement for the holder of the authorization to notify the appropriate Federal or tribal official immediately upon discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony pursuant to Sec. 10.4(b) of these regulations.**

Attachments: *“Purchase, Transfer and Management of Conservation Easements in the Southern Upper San Pedro River Basin of Cochise County, Arizona”* (June 2001)

Field Manager

Date

DECISION RECORD

EA Number: AZ-420-2005-012 “*Purchase, Transfer and Management of Conservation Easements in the Southern Upper San Pedro River Basin of Cochise County, Arizona*” (June 2001)

Lease/Serial/Case File No. various

BLM Office: Tucson Field Office, San Pedro Project Office

Decision: It is my decision to select the proposed action to purchase 7 conservation easements on private parcels of land within five miles (east or west) of the San Pedro River from willing sellers using federal funds. See attached map.

Parcel	Acres	Location
1. Logue	50.00	T.24S., R.22E., Sec 21
2. McElroy	80.00	T.24S., R.22E., Sec 16
3. Beaton	17.07	T.23S., R.22E., Sec 33
4. McArthur	49.69	T.23S., R.22E., Sec.33
5. Drijver	103.04	T.23S., R.22E., Sec.33
6. Sandlin/Miller	640.00	T.23S., R.22E., Sec 29
7. Stoner	160.00	T.23S., R.22E., Sec 21 SW1/4

These easements will include restrictions on some portion of existing (claimed) water rights, rights to conduct irrigated agriculture greater than one acre (allows for small gardens), and rights to subdivide property into smaller plots. The property on which the easements are acquired will remain in private ownership, and may be transferred to a new owner. The restrictions imposed by the easement will remain with the property in perpetuity, so when the property changes hands, the new owner will be bound by the terms of the easement.

Alternatives Considered: The two alternatives considered are similar to the proposed action. Alternative 1 encompasses less area for the potential purchases of conservation easements, extending the purchase limit to only two miles from the center of the river. Alternative 2 encompasses the same five-mile area as the proposed action, but would not involve purchase of easements to maintain open space adjacent to upland washes and riparian corridors.

Rationale for Decision: The proposed action is specifically provided for in the Safford RMP. The environmental assessment analyzed the potential impacts to the environment and the public should the easements be acquired. A FONSI has been signed; therefore there are no significant impacts to the environment that would require an environmental

impact statement. By selecting the proposed action, the Tucson Field Office is implementing this portion of the Safford District RMP.

By purchasing these easements the BLM will: 1) reduce local water use and the potential for habitat degradation adjacent to the San Pedro River; 2) promote hydrologic functions in the Upper San Pedro watershed; 3) retain wildlife habitat, open space and aesthetic values in the vicinity of the subject parcel; 4) allow for compatible economic uses; 5) maintain private ownership, stewardship and local tax base contribution by the property; and 6) comply with the Endangered Species Act.

Terms / Conditions / Stipulations: per 43CFR 10.4(g):

“All Federal authorizations to carry out land use activities on Federal lands or tribal lands, including all leases and permits, must include a requirement for the holder of the authorization to notify the appropriate Federal or tribal official immediately upon discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony pursuant to Sec. 10.4(b) of these regulations.”

“There will be no adverse energy impact”.

Field Manager

Date

Attachments:

Finding of No Significant Impact dated _____

Environmental Assessment AZ-060-2003-0033, *“Purchase, Transfer and Management of Conservation Easements in the Southern Upper San Pedro River Basin of Cochise County, Arizona”* (June 2001)